

7.8

Case study: Physician Associates Survey



LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THIS EMAIL
FROM PHYSICIAN ASSOCIATES, A HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATION
IN FLORIDA.

GIVE IT A QUICK READ AND YOU'LL SEE THE GOAL OF THIS EMAIL
IS TO GENERATE RESPONSES TO A SURVEY,
LINKED TO IN THE BODY OF THE MESSAGE.

Physician Associates needs your help

Inbox x



noreply@paof.com
to me

9/21/11



The physicians and staff of Physician Associates are committed to providing you the best medical care possible. We are always striving to improve our service to you and truly want to know how you think we are doing. To accomplish this we need to know what we are doing right and what needs improvement. We depend on our patients and their families to keep us informed.

By sharing your thoughts and feelings about your healthcare experience with us, you can help make our care better for you and future patients and their families by our Physician Associates team of doctors, nurses and staff.

To take the survey, please copy and paste the address below into your web browser or click the link:

http://0182dff.netsolhost.com/survey/patient_satisfaction_survey1.htm

Those that complete the survey by midnight on October 9th will be entered in a drawing for a \$100 Visa Gift Card.

Thank you, in advance, for your participation in this effort, which is a critical part of our continuing the commitment we have made to you.

Sincerely,
Erik Walker, MD
Chairman of the Board of Directors
Physician Associates

Please do not reply to this message. Replies to this address are routed to an unmonitored mail box. Please contact your practice if you have a question about this email. Click [here](#) to change your contact preferences for Physician Associates.

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email is confidential and solely intended for the recipient(s) named above. If you have received this email and any of its attachments in error, do not read, forward, or disclose any of the information contained within. Please, immediately notify the sender and properly destroy any and all information pertaining to this email correspondence.

THE MOST BASIC STRUCTURE OF A REQUEST LIKE THIS
REALLY ONLY NEEDS TO FOLLOW
A FEW BASIC POINTS:

Why are you sending this message?
(You need the recipient's help)

Why is it relevant to the recipient?
(The survey will provide feedback so you can provide them
with better services)

What does the recipient have to do?
(Click this link and take the survey)

[Optional] What does the recipient get for their time?
(A chance to win a gift card)

Since the goal of this email is to generate click throughs and completed surveys, your copy – and call to action – must work together to support that goal. So, your copy should be clear, concise, and direct, leading directly to a call to action that's equally clear, concise, and direct.

**AFTER A QUICK SCAN OF THE BODY COPY OF THIS EMAIL,
THERE ARE SOME GOOD THINGS HAPPENING HERE:**

- ✓ The copy includes an appeal that feels friendly and genuine
- ✓ The copy follows a logical flow: here's what we need, here's why we need it, here's what to do and why, and thanks
- ✓ Instructions are provided for how to access the survey
- ✓ An enticement is shared: complete the survey and you have a chance at a gift card
- ✓ The email is signed by a leader of the organization - this makes the request more personal (even if an email copywriter wrote it for him)

HOWEVER, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF ISSUES WITH THE COPY THAT COULD GET IN THE WAY OF ACCOMPLISHING THE GOAL OF GENERATING SURVEY COMPLETIONS:

- ❌ There's too much copy - over 120 words to basically ask "Would you please take this survey?"
- ❌ All the copy looks the same - there's no formatting or design to help emphasize things: nothing stands out, so nothing looks more important than anything else
- ❌ The call to action is ugly - a text URL, and an ugly one at that
- ❌ There's no indication of exactly what's required from the recipient - with a survey, it'd be nice to know how long it will take or what will be done with the information provided, like personal data if any
- ❌ The enticement is lost in the copy - read too fast and you'd never notice the \$100 gift card giveaway

By applying some copywriting best practices, we could improve this email and our chances of getting survey results.

HERE'S THE FIRST PARAGRAPH:

The physicians and staff of Physician Associates are committed to providing you the best medical care possible. We are always striving to improve our service to you and truly want to know how you think we are doing. To accomplish this we need to know what we are doing right and what needs improvement. We depend on our patients and their families to keep us informed.

Sounds nice, but pretty much every company you meet will say they are "committed to providing the best" whatever it is they do, "always striving to improve their service", and rely on feedback to do it right. Beginning your email by stating a bunch of obvious points that aren't all that unique from other companies doesn't help **grab attention** or **compel people to read on**.

And one other point: there's no salutation. No "Dear customer" or even a "Hey there!" The message doesn't require one, but a salutation helps messages feel a little more personal. I'd suggest using one, especially with a request like this one.

HERE'S THE SECOND PARAGRAPH:

By sharing your thoughts and feelings about your healthcare experience with us, you can help make our care better for you and future patients and their families by our Physician Associates team of doctors, nurses and staff.

This sentence essentially defines what feedback is, so again, it's an obvious point. However, there is a nugget of good information:

"...you can help make our care better for you and future patients and their families..."

This is a good piece of direct and personal copy that helps justify the purpose of sending this email.

NOW TAKE A LOOK AT THE NEXT PART:

To take the survey, please copy and paste the address below into your web browser or click the link:

http://0182dff.netsolhost.com/survey/patient_satisfaction_survey1.htm

Truth is you don't really need any of this copy - it should be replaced with a prominent button or similar visual call to action that says "Take Our Survey" or something to that effect. Most users can be counted on to understand that by clicking a button with that label, they'll be brought to a survey.

Those that complete the survey by midnight on October 9th will be entered in a drawing for a \$100 Visa Gift Card.

This copy provides a valuable piece of info: an **enticement for the reader**. What would really improve this however is something to draw it out visually. By bolding the copy about the gift card itself, you make it important and give the reader something to think about.

THE EMAIL ENDS LIKE THIS:

Thank you, in advance, for your participation in this effort, which is a critical part of our continuing the commitment we have made to you.

Sincerely,
Erik Walker, MD
Chairman of the Board of Directors
Physician Associates

The copy could be written a bit more plainly and directly - “your participation in this effort” is more formal than it needs to be - but otherwise it's an effective way to end this message. Since you're making a request, sending it from someone prominent helps the cause: it gives the request real weight.

Ultimately, you could shorten the email dramatically and deliver the same message with more focused and direct copy.

Dear Patients and Families,

*Physician Associates is always looking to provide **better care for you and your family.***
So, we hope you'll complete a short survey to help us.

This survey should take no more than 5 minutes.

*And if you complete it before midnight on October 9th you'll be entered to win a **\$100 Visa Gift Card!***

[TAKE OUR SURVEY] ← clickable button

Thank you in advance for sharing your thoughts and feelings about your healthcare experience with us.

Sincerely,
Erik Walker, MD
Chairman of the Board of Directors
Physician Associates

Not only is the copy much shorter, but certain points have been emphasized visually with formatting. Even if the reader ONLY read those emphasized points - “better care for you and your family... complete a short survey... no more than 5 minutes... win a \$100 Visa gift card” - that would be enough to grab the attention of at least some people and get them to click the link.